

Visits with Local 'Troops to Teachers' Educators

SCOTTSDALE - U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell today shadowed a participant of the Troops to Teachers (TTT) program at Kyrene de la Colina Elementary School in Ahwatukee to highlight the economic and educational benefits of the Troops to Teachers Enhancement Act.

"The Troops to Teachers Enhancement act supports both our veterans and our schools in one bill," Mitchell said. "As a former teacher, I know how important it is to have well-trained instructors in the classrooms. We need to help veterans in the transition back to civilian life and welcome their transition to the classroom."

Mitchell also honored Troops to Teachers who have been educators for 5 years. He was joined by John D. Scheuer, the Program Manager for the Troops to Teachers Arizona Office at the Arizona Department of Veterans' Services.

The TTT program was established in 1994 to help troops transitioning out of the military find careers in education. It has contributed to the gender and racial diversity of the teaching workforce, as well as helped increase the number of teachers in priority subject areas such as math, science, special education or vocational education.

Mitchell, a former high school teacher, and a member of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs, is a co-sponsor of H.R. 3943, the bipartisan Post 9/11 Troops to Teachers Enhancement Act.

The Troops to Teachers Enhancement Act would:

- Extend the eligibility for the program stipend to any participant who agrees to teach three years in any school that is in a district that receives Title I funds, as defined in Section 2102 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.
- Reduce service requirements to make the program more attractive to younger veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan by allowing any servicemember who has served at least

90 days of continuous active duty since September 11, 2001, eligible for participation in TTT.

- Reduces the active duty service requirement from six years to four for those who have not served 90 days since 9/11
- Create an advisory board charged with improving awareness of the program, increasing participation, and ensuring that the program meets the needs of our schools and our veterans.

TTT is funded by the Department of Education, administered by the Department of Defense and was last reauthorized by Congress as part of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.